

SUMMARY, CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS OF THE AIRPORT ADVISORY BOARD

KEY ELEMENTS: Mayor Albert Johnson recognized the need to consolidate the City's airports into one location which could be protected from encroaching growth. The Board believes his vision was correct, and, if protected, predict continued growth of our Airport's value to the citizens of Las Cruces.

Graphics: Exhibit GP-1 - 1955 Photo of "East" Airport.
Exhibit GP-2 - 1965 Photo of "East" Airport.
Exhibit GP-3 - 1965 Photo of NMSU Airport.

CITY GROWTH CLOSES "CLOSE-IN" AIRPORTS: In 1970 the City of Las Cruces had a population of 37,857, and two airports within three miles of City Hall. In 1994 the population inside City limits was 71,043. In the intervening years, two public airports and at least one private airport have succumbed to municipal growth (see Exhibits). The "West Mesa Airport" is all that remains for our City's use and future.

THE DREAM OF MAYOR ALBERT JOHNSON. Mayor Johnson served on the City Council from 1968 to 1980, and was a major supporter of the current International Airport. He urged development of the new terminal, consolidation of storage hangars at the west end of the airfield, and the construction of two "over-sized" hangars to support the budding Zia Airlines, and to house corporate aircraft. Airport ramps were expanded, and a general cleanup of the facility took place. While praised in the aviation press, Mr. Johnson was roundly criticized locally, for pushing development of an airport "way out there on the West Mesa". Now we have residential building projects literally knocking at our door.

THE BOARD'S EXPECTATIONS FOR LAS CRUCES INTERNATIONAL AIRPORT: In an extension of Mayor Johnson's vision, and in view of area population expansion, the Board foresees the environment of the Airport as one of compatible development, which welcomes growth of the West Mesa Industrial Park and other non-residential neighbors. We have included in our Master Plan provisions for expansion of the Airport in a manner to support the expanding municipal area, surrounded by "good neighbors".

While the petitioners have based their arguments on current and past airport usage, we choose to develop our position on the future expansion of the community and the concomitant growth of the Airport.

We predict an expansion of the West Mesa Industrial Park, which will parallel the growth of the international crossing site at Santa Teresa. We feel that a highway linking the crossing site with our Industrial Park and I-10 as a logical outgrowth of international commerce in the area. Smoothly operating throughput facilities on the Airport along with coordinated (and extensive) use of the southeast and northwest runways. Our Master Plan includes such an eventuality.

All aircraft operators, both small and large, attempt to position themselves (prior to landing or takeoff) in a manner which minimizes necessary ground time and taxiing. The larger the aircraft, the more important (in terms of dollars) is the smooth flow of aircraft: Land, roll out to a high speed turnoff, enter the terminal area, disembark cargo or passengers, refuel, reload, taxi to the nearest take-off position and depart.

NOISE: The noise generated by Airport operations will only increase with expanded use. Increases in traffic, especially the addition of more frequent flights, and the possibility of freight operations serving Las Cruces International Airport, indicate a need to take a less conservative view of noise profiles than those portrayed in current assessments. In addition, there is a realistic expectation that large helicopter operations by the New Mexico Army National Guard might increase ten-fold at our Airport in the near term.

It is frequently said that an aircraft engine is a device which has been designed to convert fuel into noise. Diesel engines on large trucks also qualify. While the radial engine of W.W.II conjures up nostalgic, even romantic notions in the heart of an aviator, the same engine on the front of a cropduster, flying low and developing maximum performance, can loosen fillings. Some prop-driven freighters, which might well serve a multi-modal facility on the Las Cruces International Airport, develop at least 12 times the horsepower of a cropduster.

As part of the active Army's "down sizing", there is a possibility that an active-duty UH-60 "Blackhawk" helicopter unit will transfer to the New Mexico Army National Guard. It is likely that the existing National Guard UH-1 "HUEY" helicopter company would be moved from Santa Fe to our Airport. It should be noted that it is commonly accepted that complaints about helicopter noise vastly exceed that of jets, even though the helicopter noises are well below that required to produce hearing damage. The low frequency noise from the flapping helicopter blades is apparently less transitory and therefore more annoying.

SUMMARY OF THE REPORT

1. Our City's efforts to maintain the Airport in the original plan form created during World War Two has paid off:
 - a. The Airport is poised to absorb an anticipated regional service in the near term.
 - b. The runways are configured in a manner that will support long term growth to accommodate regional, military and international expansion.
 - c. By not succumbing to short-term economic gains, our City has sustained the existence of all three runways through the vagaries of change.
2. The use of GPS approaches at Las Cruces International Airport enhances the flexibility of our Airport. Our runways have been surveyed, and are ready for non-precision approaches at this time. Cost associated with non-precision approaches is insignificant. Costs associated with

precision GPS approaches are minimal, with the major components supplied by the aircraft owner.

3. By expending resources to sustain the life of all three runways in spite of fluctuations in federal funding priorities, Las Cruces has continued its eligibility for improvements and continued life of the complex.

4. The vast majority of encroachment actions reviewed in data accumulated for this study revealed less than harmonious relationships between active airports and residential development near airports. Sources described permanent residential development as "non-compatible development" near airports.

5. The Board maintains that its interpretation of the Overlay Zone around the Las Cruces International Airport is accurate and technically sound. Conversely, the Board views petitioner's interpretation of the overlay zone as subjective.

6. At the time of establishment of the ETZ, members of the joint committee appeared not to recognize the proximity of the Burke land to the Airport when such property was changed from "unzoned" to "residential use".

CONCLUSIONS OF THE BOARD

1. The City has been charged with upkeep and maintenance of our Airport "forever". To attain that end, Las Cruces, in cooperation with the State of New Mexico, BLM, and Dona Ana County, acquired land and created a buffer of compatible land use as is described in the Overlay Zone. It is our City's responsibility to the taxpayers to see that such lands are productively and efficiently utilized, but not at the risk of losing full utilization of the Airport.

2. Following a detailed review of the factors outlined herein, it is the unanimous conclusion of the Airport Advisory Board that the proposed development is a threat to the future growth, potential, and ultimately, the very existence of the Las Cruces International Airport.

PRIMARY RECOMMENDATIONS

1. The City, in conjunction with Dona Ana County and other appropriate agencies, make a detailed examination of the Overlay Zone to establish defined and legally supported boundaries to ensure the continued operation and future expansion of our Airport.
2. The City study the possibility of condemnation and purchase of that portion of the Burke land which presents the greatest threat to the continued use and growth of the Airport.

CONCOMITANT RECOMMENDATIONS

As stated in the introduction, the conclusions of the Board are based on significant aviation concerns. The Board is acutely aware of the potential of the planned resort and housing development to create jobs and generate taxes over the long term. However, the Airport Advisory Board does not consider the limitation on use or displacement of the Airport, over the long term, to be an acceptable trade-off for these gains.

1. Should the City Council, in its deliberation, find the above primary recommendations of the Board unworkable, or determines the development to be inevitable, the Board unanimously recommends annexation of the land in question into the City of Las Cruces, as opposed to ETZ development, for the following reasons:

a. As a portion of the City, the development would be more attuned to harmonious relation with the Airport.

b. Annexation of the property would open the way to annexation of approximately 2,000 additional acres of land along the east Airport perimeter, thus fulfilling a portion of the Board's recommendations.

c. The City would be in a position to ensure compliance with agreements and other constraints which would be in the best interests of our Airport, specifically:

- (1) Provisions for deed restrictions and "Avigation Easements."
- (2) Assurance that the general plan for open areas is binding.
- (3) Assurance that lands dedicated to the resort are not convertible to permanent residential housing.
- (4) Holding petitioners to a density of housing, no greater than the current zoning on the property.
- (5) Assurance that all Airport-related constraints be tied to deeds.

- (6) Assurances that the acreage (475) in the buffer (resort) area, as shown on the Schematic Development Plan of March 5, 1997, would not revert to permanent residential housing in the event a resort developer is not found by a specified date.

2. Inasmuch as petitioners are portraying the resort as a buffer between the Airport and planned residential development, the Airport Advisory Board further recommends that no permanent residential development take place in those areas dedicated to the resort, under any condition.

3. Whereas both the Federal Aviation Administration and Dona Ana County - in matters relating to the Overlay Zone - include in the term "Residential" such structures as hospitals, schools (including daycare centers), and homes for seniors, the same condition should persevere in City use of the term regarding the Airport.

Exhibit I-1

0 FEET 8000
SCALE
(approximate)

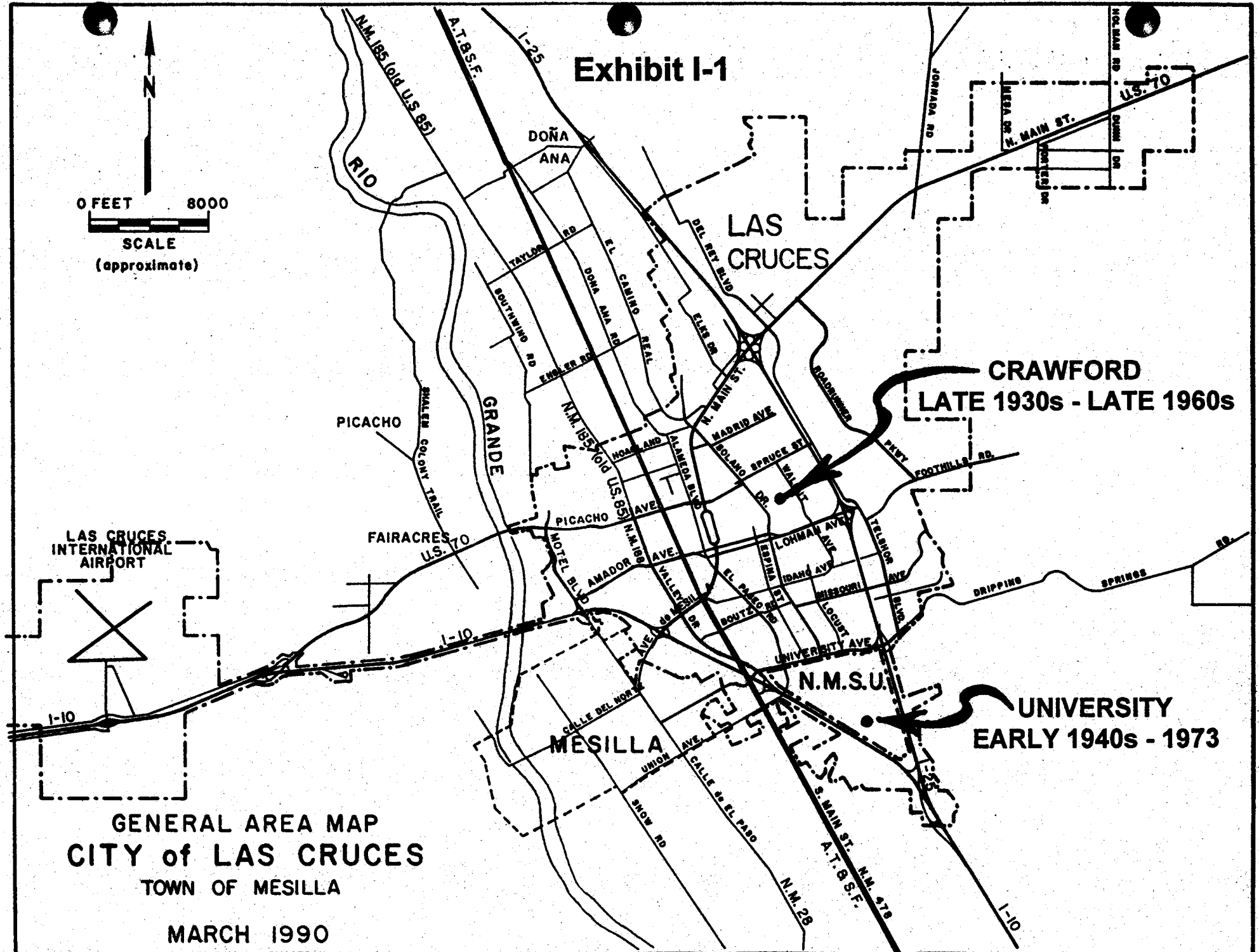
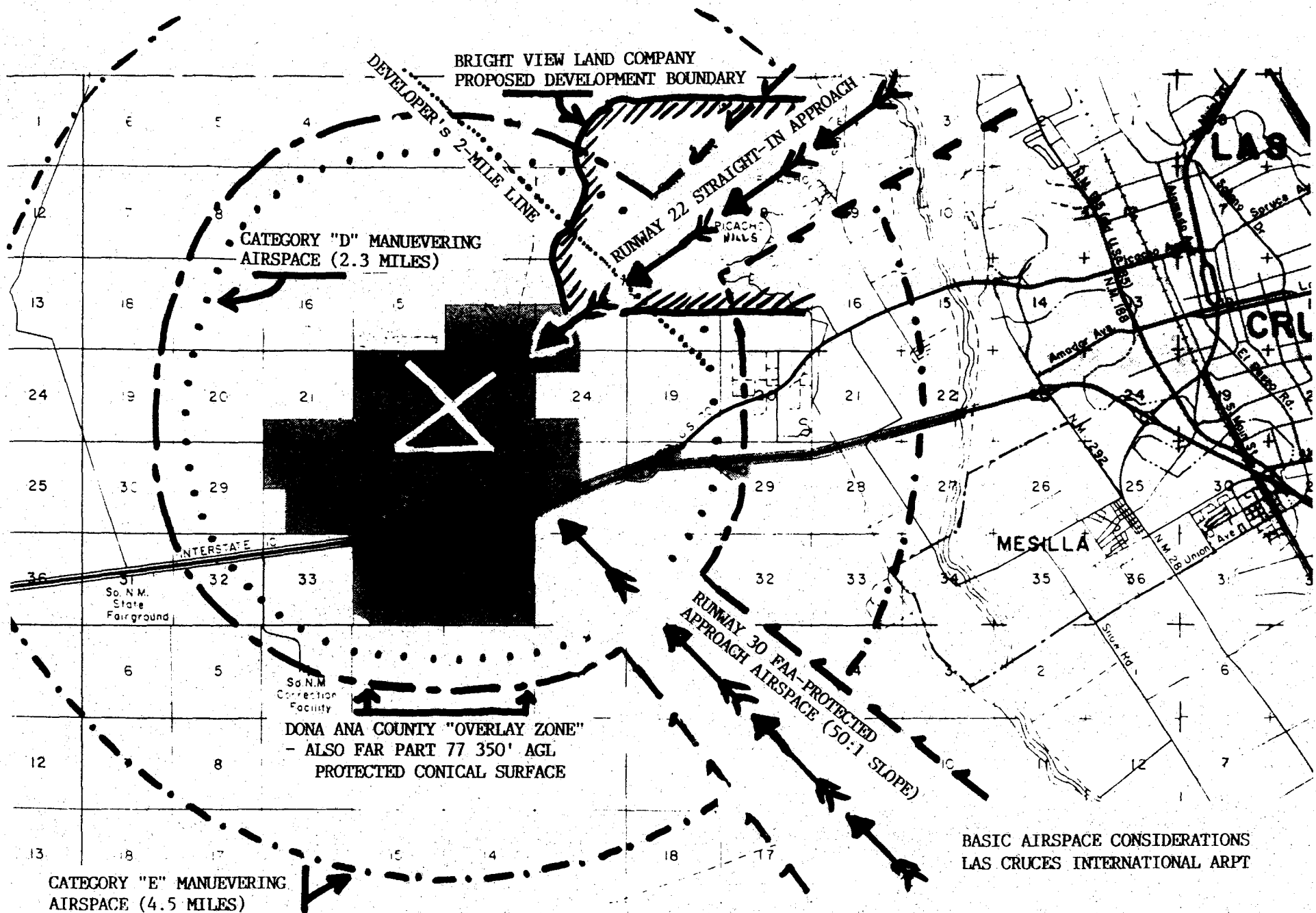


Exhibit OZ-1



Landing Facilities and Airports Abandoned 1981-1991

Year	Total Landing Facilities Abandoned	Public-Use Landing Facilities Abandoned	Private-Use Landing Facilities Abandoned	Total Airports Abandoned	Public-Use Airports Abandoned	Private-Use Airports Abandoned
1981	377	148	229	283	113	170
1982	444	105	339	297	59	238
1983	335	83	252	241	56	185
1984	300	43	257	198	33	165
1985	306	45	261	209	42	167
1986	375	58	317	261	48	213
1987	401	66	335	275	54	221
1988	333	40	293	211	30	181
1989	367	37	330	225	29	196
1990	418	48	370	270	39	231
1991	387	38	349	278	30	248

Exhibit RE-1

This valuable, metropolitan airport has gone

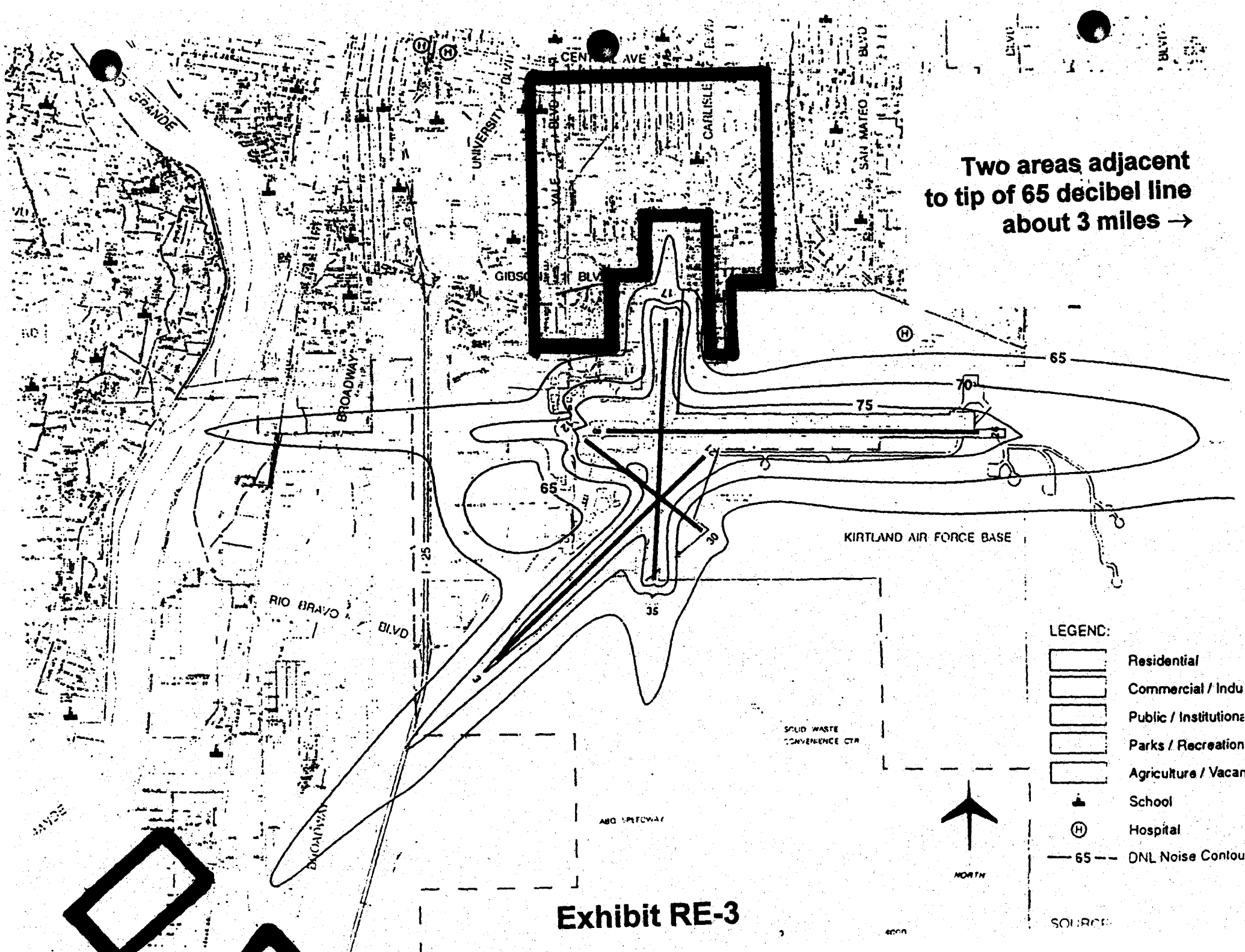
From...



To...



Exhibit RE-2



Two areas adjacent
to tip of 65 decibel line
about 3 miles →

LEGEND:

- Residential
- Commercial / Indu
- Public / Institutions
- Parks / Recreation
- Agriculture / Vacan
- School
- Hospital
- 65 --- DNL Noise Contour



Exhibit RE-3

SOURCE:

Albuquerque Noise Patterns Overlayed on LCIA

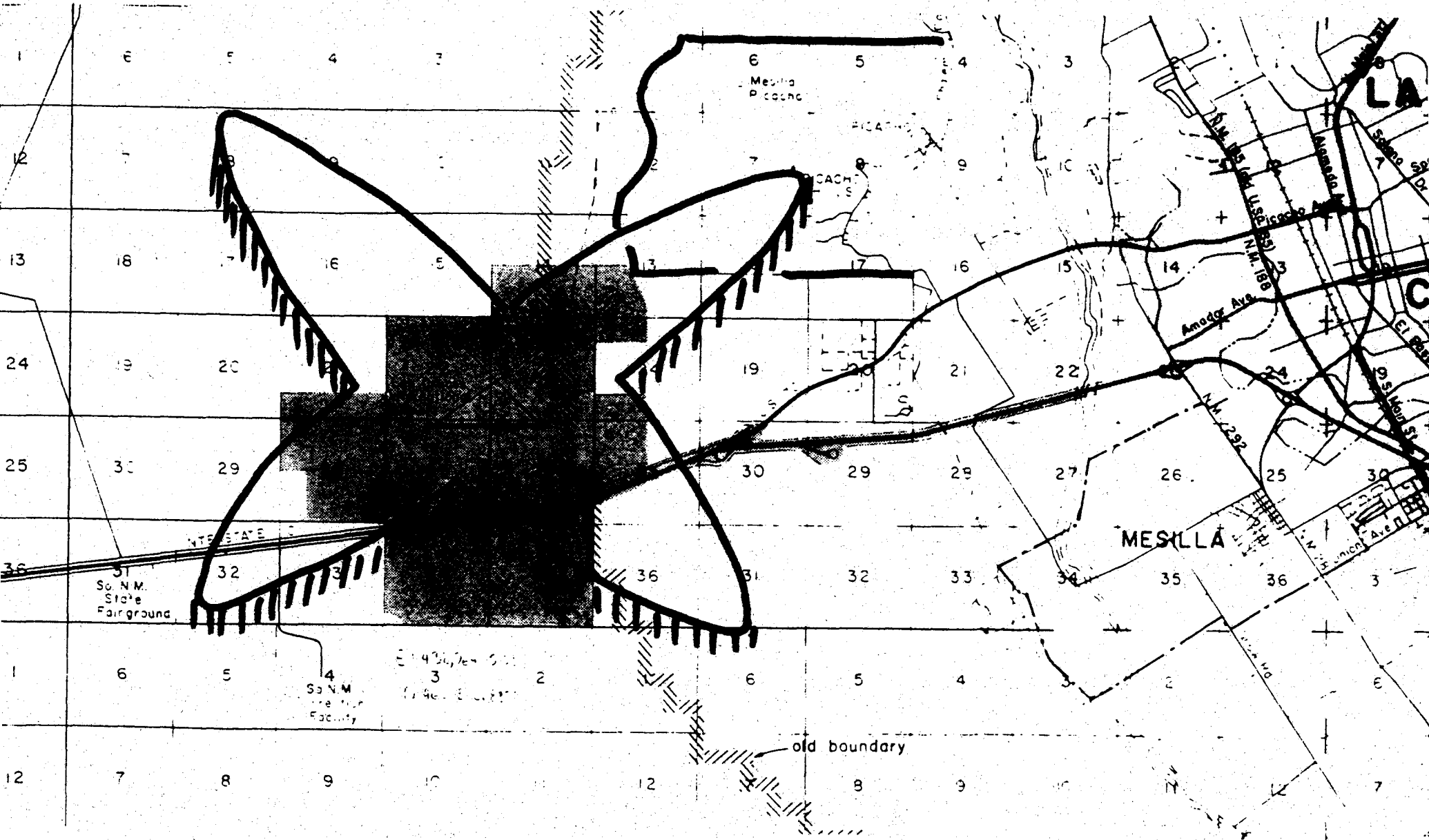
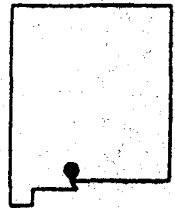


Exhibit RE-4

LAS CRUCES - EL PASO = 45 Miles (To the South)

LAS CRUCES - ALBUQUERQUE = 192 Miles (To the North)



- ◆ Las Cruces International Airport (LRU) is located in Dona Ana County which lies in southern New Mexico. The population of Dona Ana County was 158,849 as of July, 1995. Las Cruces is the second largest city and one of the fastest growing in New Mexico. The Texas - New Mexico border is located 25 miles south of Las Cruces.
- ◆ The rapid local and regional growth is due to many factors, including:
 - The proximity to the White Sands Missile Range;
 - Industrial development related to the North American Free Trade Agreement (NAFTA);
 - Tourism in conjunction with meeting and convention business, interest in the area's unique history as well as its natural and diverse environment, and the short distance to the country of Mexico;
 - Expanding scientific research facilities;
 - Increasing enrollments and business development programs at New Mexico State University (NMSU);
 - Perceived attractiveness of the area as a retirement community.
- ◆ Only two weekday nonstop flights, with an additional one-stop flight in each direction, are provided between Las Cruces and Albuquerque. The service is flown with the 19-passenger Beech 1900D turboprop by Mesa Airlines and attracts some of the local market between the two cities. There are no direct flights to accommodate heavy east or westbound demand for hub connections in Dallas / Ft. Worth or Phoenix.

- ◆ The top passenger markets from Las Cruces continue to be evenly spread among Dallas, Phoenix, Los Angeles and Las Vegas, with regular demand for air service to Denver, Washington, D.C., San Diego, Boston and numerous other cities in the east, southeast and midwest.
- ◆ The capture rate for local airline service from the Las Cruces International Airport is approximately 3%. Over 90% of air travelers decide to utilize ground transportation to the El Paso airport to originate their trips on direct flights (usually Southwest Airlines) or on flights offering on-line connections at Dallas / Ft. Worth (American and Delta Air Lines), Phoenix (America West and Southwest Airlines), Chicago (American Airlines) and Houston (Continental Airlines).
- ◆ Las Cruces represents a very large air service demand profile which is expected to grow at an annual rate of 5.6%. This forecast means that the 1992 estimate of 176,000 area air travelers will escalate to over 469,000 passengers by the year 2010.

MINIMUM AIR SERVICE RECOMMENDATIONS LAS CRUCES

- Two (2) daily code-share flights to and from America West Airlines' Phoenix hub with 30-seat turboprop aircraft; one (1) flight nonstop with the other frequency via Silver City.
- Or:
- Two (2) daily code-share flights in each direction on a Dallas / Ft. Worth - Las Cruces - Silver City - Phoenix roundtrip to connect with American Airlines or Delta Air Lines in Dallas and America West Airlines in Phoenix. Due to the rapid growth of air service demand from this area, Las Cruces could support 30-seat turboprops as well as 50-seat regional jet code-share service to and from hub complexes in Dallas / Ft. Worth and/or Phoenix.

**DFW
LRU
SVC
PHX**

**Dallas / Ft. Worth
Las Cruces
Silver City
Phoenix**

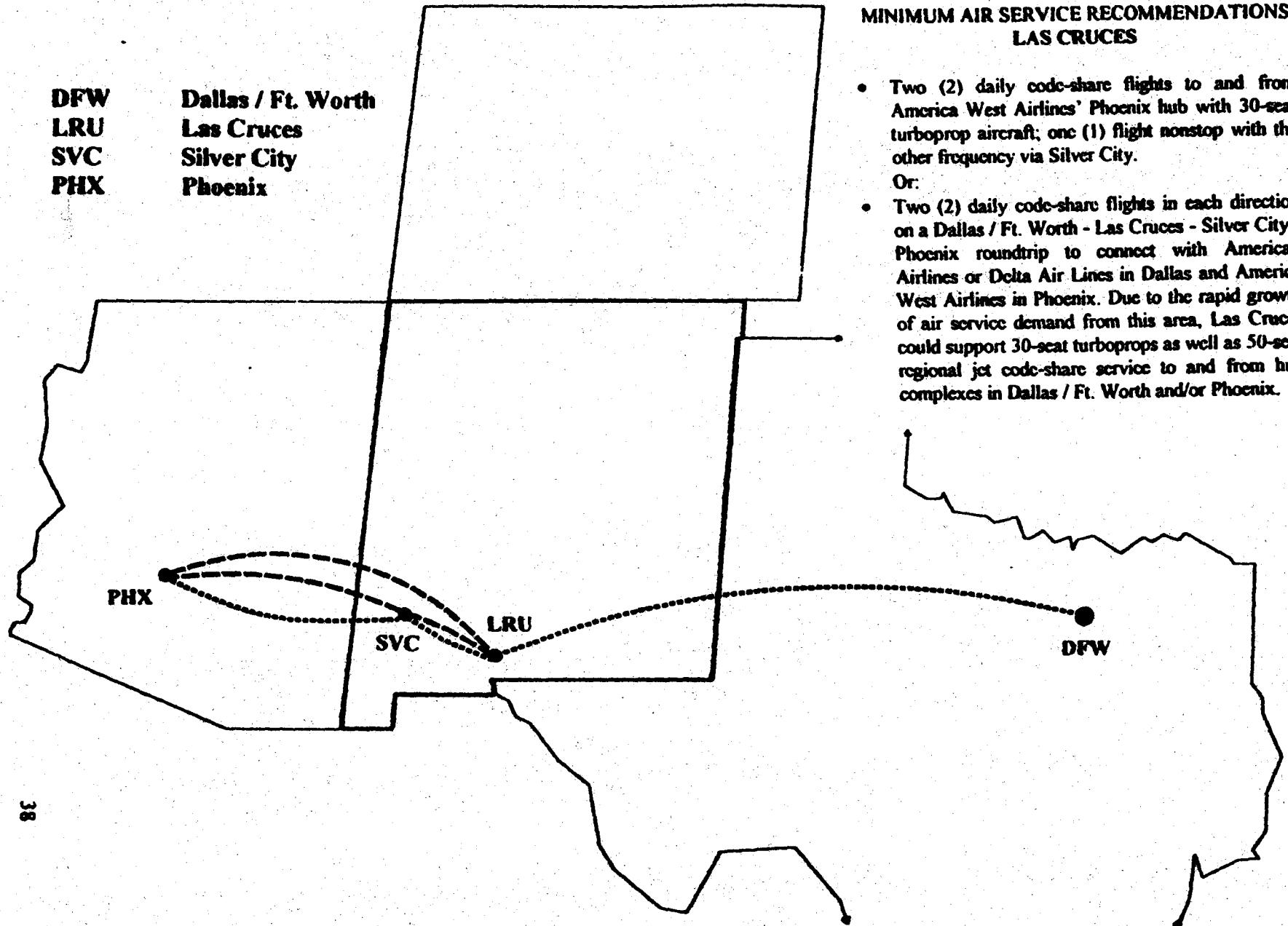


Exhibit R-1

Exhibit GP-1

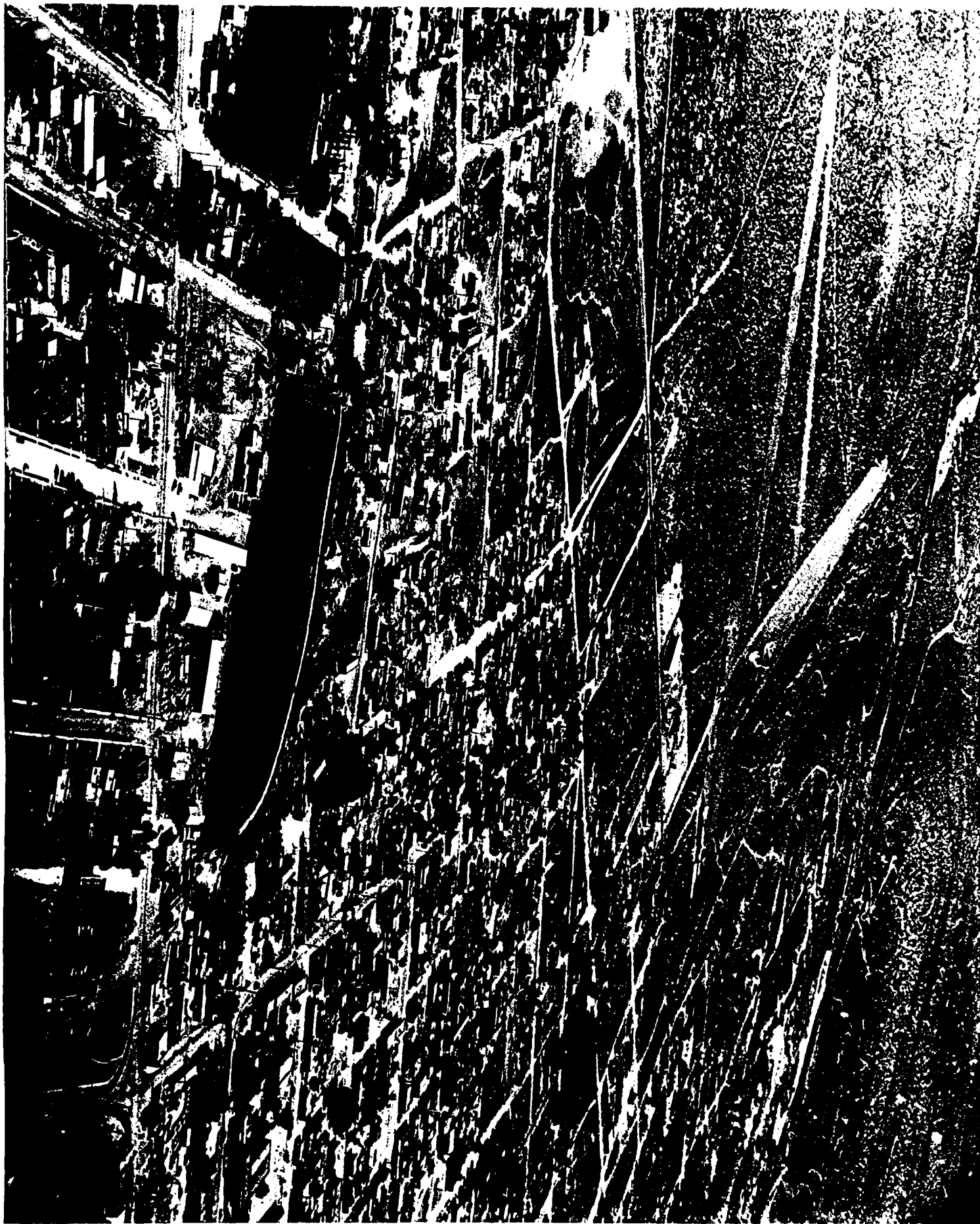




Exhibit GP-2

Exhibit GP-3

